

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A protecting device for an occupant of a vehicle comprising:
 - an airbag positioned to inflate along an interior side of a vehicle;
 - a tube containing pressurized gas configured to extend along the side of the vehicle in the longitudinal direction of the vehicle;
 - a plurality of openings in the tube positioned to allow the pressurized gas to enter and inflate the airbag;
 - a plurality of inflation devices connected to the tube, wherein each inflation device produces an exhaust gas for further pressurizing the pressurized gas.
2. The device of claim 1, wherein each opening is covered by a frangible seal configured to break when the pressurized gas reaches a predetermined pressure and thereby release the gas into the airbag.
3. The device of claim 1, wherein each of the inflation devices is located in an end of the tube.
4. The device of claim 1, wherein each of the inflation devices includes an igniter.
5. The device of claim 1, wherein each of the inflation devices includes a cap containing a booster propellant.
6. The device of claim 1, wherein at least two of the openings are positioned to face in generally opposite directions so that gas exiting the tube and entering the airbag through the at least two openings enters the airbag in generally opposing directions.
7. The device of claim 1, wherein the tube is curved along its length.
8. The device of claim 1, wherein the length of the tube corresponds generally to the

distance between A and C pillars of the vehicle.

9. An inflator for an airbag comprising:

an elongated pipe containing an inert gas;

a pair of igniters, wherein the igniters are positioned at opposite ends of the tube;

wherein the elongated tube contains a plurality of spaced apart openings positioned along the length of the tube, wherein the openings are sealed until the inert gas reaches a predetermined pressure.

10. The inflator of claim 9, wherein the inert gas is prepressurized.

11. The inflator of claim 9, wherein each of the openings is covered by a rupturable seal.

12. The inflator of claim 9, further comprising a gas inlet for charging the inert gas into the pipe.

13. The inflator of claim 12, wherein the gas inlet is sealed.

14. The inflator of claim 13, wherein the gas inlet is sealed by ball welding.

15. The inflator of claim 9, wherein the pipe is curved.

16. The inflator of claim 9, further comprising a pair of caps, wherein each cap covers each of the igniters.

17. The inflator of claim 16, wherein each cap contains booster propellant.

18. The inflator of claim 16, wherein the ends of the pipe are sealed by caulking

material.

19. The inflator of claim 17, wherein the ends of the pipe are sealed by caulking material.

20. A device for protecting an occupant of a vehicle comprising:

- an airbag positioned to inflate along an interior side of a vehicle;

- a pipe having a sealed opening at each end and extending in the longitudinal direction of the vehicle along the upper part of the airbag and configured to conform to the shape of the upper part of the airbag, wherein the pipe is filled with pressurized gas;

- a plurality of gas outflow openings in the pipe positioned along the length of the pipe to allow the pressurized gas to enter and inflate the airbag, wherein the gas outflow openings are sealed until the pressurized gas reaches a predetermined pressure;

- a pair of inflation devices connected to the tube, wherein each inflation device includes an initiator and a booster propellant for producing an exhaust gas for further pressurizing the pressurized gas, wherein each inflation device is positioned in one of the sealed openings located at the ends of the pipe so that the initiator can receive a triggering signal from a control device when the occurrence of a vehicle collision is detected by a sensor.